

DEFINITION OF A MOUNTAIN PEAK.

The Century Dictionary says:

"Peak-- A mountain which is particularly conspicuous on account of its height above the adjacent region, or because more or less isolated."

"Mountain Chain-- The more or less separated and distinct peaks, summits, or crests together make up the range."

The essential requirements of a peak, are then, height above adjacent region and a separation by distance from points equally high or higher.

Mountain ranges are made up of innumerable points which are all part of the same general geologic mass and yet are separated from each other, both horizontally and vertically, by varying distances. A prominent point on a ridge may be called a "shoulder" or a "ridge", but it cannot be a "peak" unless it is higher than all adjacent points on the ridge.

The horizontal and vertical separations between points in a mountain range are found in all degrees of magnitude and it is necessary to establish some arbitrary standard to determine whether two points are separate peaks or two projecting points on the same peak.

In the absence of some established standard, we can assume that if the difference in elevation between the saddle (or lowest point of the ridge connecting two points) and the summit of the lower of the two points must be at least 100 ft., and if it is no more than 100 ft., then the two points must be at least 10,000 ft. apart, in an air line, in order to be classed as two peaks. On the other hand, the peaks must be at least 1000 ft. apart, in an air line, and if they are no more than this distance apart, then the difference in elevation between the saddle and the lower of the two

point s must be 1000 ft., in order to be classed as two peaks.

In both of the above limiting cases, the number of units of vertical separation (each unit being 100 ft.), plus the number of units of horizontal separation (each unit being 1000 ft.), equals 11. For intermediate cases, the sum of the two units must equal 11.

The general definition may then be stated as follows:

If two points are separated by a horizontal distance of 1000 ft. or more, and a vertical distance of 100 ft. or more (from the low point on the ridge to the top of the lower of the two points), and if the sum of the units of horizontal separation (each unit being 1000 ft.), plus the units of vertical separation (each unit being 100 ft.), is 11 or more, then the two points constitute separate peaks and are entitled to individual names. If the sum of such units is less than 11, then the two points are both part of the same peak and must either be named collectively or the name applied to the higher of the two points.